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Schweinitz, Edmund Alexander d.**In Memoriam.**



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In Memoriam.

EDMUND ALEXANDER DE SCHWEINITZ, S.T.D.,

EPISCOPUS FRATRUM.

BORN MARCH 20, 1825.

ENTERED INTO REST, DECEMBER 18, 1887.



EDWIN G. KLOSÈ,
MANAGER.

IN the Advent season, usually on the Sunday next preceding the Christmas festival, it is the custom of the Moravian Church at Bethlehem, Pa., to hold a special service for all who are engaged in the work of the congregation as well as in the general work of the Church, whether as Ministers, Elders, Trustees, Teachers, Musicians, Sextons, etc. For the special bond which causes the lovefeast to be held, is fellowship in work for Christ and His Church.

An informal spirit pervades this meeting. Opportunity is given to everyone to make suggestions as to Church work, to speak of improvements that may be advantageously introduced, to call attention to abuses that may threaten an entrance, and to free the mind of thoughts which are as a burden to the soul. As the hour for closing draws near, the presiding minister is wont to recall the names of those servants of the Church and her living Head, whom the Lord has been pleased to call home to Himself during the year since the last meeting, and to exhort to greater faithfulness and devotion on the part of those who survive.

Thus it was on the afternoon of the Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 18, 1887, when one who had often presided

at this meeting while Pastor of the congregation and while presiding officer of the Provincial Board, officiated for the last time in an earthly sanctuary. Who of his fellow servants for Christ's sake and the Gospel's will ever forget that the truth of the last hymn which he announced—

“One army of the living God,
To His command we bow ;
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now”—

was so soon exemplified in his being called home by that Master Whom he had so faithfully loved and served ! For at eventide on the self-same day the summons came to him and he “crossed the flood,” to be “forever with the Lord.”

“Servant of God ! well done ;
Rest from thy loved employ ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.”

EDMUND ALEXANDER DE SCHWEINITZ

was born at Bethlehem, Pa., on March 20, 1825, where his father, the Rev. Lewis David de Schweinitz, Ph.D., was then stationed, filling the offices of member of the Provincial Helpers' Conference or Board of Direction of the Northern District of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum, commonly called the Moravian Church, Senior Minister of Bethlehem congregation, *Senior Civilis* of the Unitas Fratrum, and titular Proprietor and actual Administrator of the Unity's Estates in North America.

Between the years 1831 and 1834 he attended the Parochial School at Bethlehem, and in the latter year entered Nazareth Hall as a pupil in the academic department. Five years later, having completed this course, he became a mem-

ber of the Preparand Class, pursuing classical studies preparatory to entering the Theological Seminary.

In the year 1844 he made his first visit to Europe, and after spending some time in visiting relatives and family connections in Germany, was regularly entered as a student in the University of Berlin. In later days he often recalled his student life and deemed it a special privilege that Neander was one of the professors with whom he stood on very friendly footing. During his stay at Berlin he became a member of the *Wingolf Verein*, a Christian association of students.

In November, 1845, he received his first Church appointment, as teacher in the Boys' School at Zeyst, Holland, serving here until June, 1846. His experiences as an American teacher of mainly British lads in a Dutch school were often trying, but with many of his colleagues he formed lasting friendships, which he was privileged to renew in later years. After several months spent

in traveling he returned to America, pursuant to a call to serve as teacher in Nazareth Hall. The years from 1847 to 1850 were spent in this institution, and as teacher of the Classical Department or Preparand Class.

His first connection with the Theological Seminary as Professor, was severed in 1850 by his receiving a temporary appointment as pastor of the Moravian congregation at Canal Dover, Ohio. After a short visit to Europe in the same year, when he was married at Herrnhut, Saxony, on October 10, to Lydia de Tschirschky, he became pastor of the Brethren's Church at Lebanon, Pa. Here he spent the first years of his married life, and laid the foundation of many friendships with clergymen and divines of other denominations. In 1853, he became pastor of what is now the First Moravian Church in Philadelphia, at that time our only Church in that city, which had been founded by his ancestor, Bishop Count Zinzendorf in 1741-43. His labors here as in his former

charge were owned and blessed of the Lord, and during his incumbency, the church-edifice at the corner of Franklin and Wood Streets was erected.

After the death of the Rev. Edward Rondthaler, in 1855, he undertook, in addition to faithful work in the congregation, the arduous duties of the theological professorship until the temporary establishment of the Seminary at the Ephrata House, in Nazareth. But it was not only in the congregation and the Theological Seminary that he was active.

For many years constitutional changes had been dreamed of, hoped for, openly advocated or antagonized, and now was come the period of debate and decision ; and in this hoping, advocacy and decision he bore a prominent part, both in private deliberations and consultations, in the semi-private discussions of the Ministers' Conferences, and in the debates of the Provincial Synods. Such confidence in his principles and capabilities

was felt by his brethren that the Provincial Synod of 1855, by express resolution, appointed him to be the Editor of *The Moravian*, the new weekly Church-paper which was to succeed the *Intelligencer*, founded thirty-three years before, and the *Miscellany*, which the Synod of 1849 founded. Wisely using the authority granted by the Synod the new venture was so successful, that the Synod of 1856 adopted a resolution of commendation which forms *The Moravian's* platform even at the present time.

His multiplied work, though voluntarily borne, undermined his health ; and humanly speaking the Church, of which he was so faithful a servant, might not have been called upon to mourn his loss at a comparatively early age, if he had not attempted, with apparent but only temporary success, to do work which was amply sufficient for three men, namely, the duties of the active pastorate, those of a professor, and those of an editor who had to contend with more than the

ordinary amount of lethargy and inertia, as well as with considerable active opposition. Add to this the strain caused by the constitutional discussions, and it is no wonder that his health suffered. Yet his work was well done, more especially in the editorial chair and in the congregation, for there are many who will arise and call him blessed.

On October 9, 1856, on the first ballot, he was elected a delegate to the General Synod of the Unitas Fratrum which convened at Herrnhut, Saxony, in 1857, and, though one of the youngest members of that important convocation, he exercised no little influence in the deliberations which resulted in the establishment of the constitutional principles on which the present general and provincial government of the Moravian Church is based. In fact, from the year 1855 to the time of his death, his activity was so interwoven with the history of the Northern District of the American Province of the Unitas Fratrum, that scarcely a

measure can be cited which will not at once suggest his name.

After establishing *The Moravian* on a good basis, he retired from its direct control in 1858, but only for a time; for he was again called to take charge of it in 1861, shortly after his assumption of the Lititz pastorate, and remained in prominent connection with the Church-paper until 1867, when he permanently retired.

As the Philadelphia pastorate, so the Lititz pastorate was owned and blessed by the Lord in a remarkable degree, and many hearts were grieved when he accepted the call to Bethlehem in 1864. But Bethlehem was destined to be the place of his greatest pastoral work, and for sixteen years he ministered unto it in spiritual things. During his incumbency both the chapel and the large church were remodeled and renovated, and great impetus was given to congregational work.

However arduous the duties of the pastorate of the Bethlehem congregation, our departed

brother, true to the principles which he had adopted to guide him in his service of the Church, did with all his might what his hand found to do, and continued doing it while health and strength remained. As noted above, his connection with *The Moravian* continued until 1867, and he delivered lectures on the History of the Brethren's Church in the Theological Seminary, and became President of that institution in September, 1867. The development of the Seminary into its present form is largely due to his influence and active endeavors; for it was he who successfully inaugurated the plan of drawing financial support directly from the churches. In these years he gave many a practical proof of the truism that to do things you must *do* them—a lesson which has not yet been fully learned.

Having been ordained Deacon on March 3, 1850, and Presbyterian, on October 12, 1856, he was solemnly consecrated to the Episcopate on August 28, 1870. The conservative tendency of this

spiritual office made itself felt in his character, and his influence in the Church at large greatly increased. Already in 1864 he had been elected Vice-President of the Provincial Synod, and in the Synods of 1876, 1878, 1881, and 1884 he served as President. In the year 1878 he was elected a member of the Provincial Elders' Conference or Board of Direction of the Northern District of the American Province of the Moravian Church, and was re-elected in 1881 and 1884, serving as President of the Board. This period was one of great anxiety and care, and the increasing demands upon his time and strength compelled him, in 1880, to resign the pastorate of the Church at Bethlehem. But to the end of his life he took deep interest in the welfare of the congregation with which he had so long been identified.

As Bishop and delegate of the Provincial Board he attended the sessions of the General Synod of 1879, at Herrnhut, Saxony, and at the special desire of the members present from the German

Province, seconded by the brethren of the British Province, he was unanimously elected its President. There can be no question as to the fact that this honor was deeply appreciated, marking as it did the complete subsidence of all possible estrangement and suspicion caused by the constitutional discussions of 1857. Those who know from experience how well skilled he was in the government of deliberative bodies such as Provincial Synods are apt to be, need not be told that he presided over the sessions of the General Synod to the entire satisfaction of all the members.

His plans for traveling after the Synod were somewhat disturbed by the illness of his brother, Bishop Emil A. de Schweinitz, but he was enabled to visit all but one of our congregations in Bohemia, as well as many of the ancient seats of the Brethren's Church. This was a great delight to him, in as much as he had devoted much time to the study of the history of the Ancient Unitas

Fratrum, had been engaged for years upon the preparation of the work which gives the only adequate account of that Church, and had been largely instrumental in establishing our Church-work in Bohemia on its present basis.

In 1885 he resigned the Presidency of the Theological Seminary, and all his remaining time and strength were devoted to the general work of the Church, including the Presidency of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen. At times this general work was very exhausting in its demands, and the labors and hardships of visitations were proved to the utmost from the very beginning of his service as Provincial Elder. Spiritually, he enjoyed the work in spite of its many difficulties, but his strength having been undermined by overwork in behalf of the Church, there is little doubt that his end was hastened by the demands of his official position.

For the past year his health visibly failed, and

his friends feared that the Church would soon lose a devoted and efficient servant and counselor, and his family an affectionate husband and father. Under strict medical advice he had refrained, to a considerable extent, from taking part in any public service ; but his spirit chafed under the wise restriction. At his own request, he dedicated the Laurel Street Chapel of the Bethlehem congregation on Sunday afternoon, December 11, and on the day of his death, Sunday, December 18, as before noted, he presided at the love-feast held by the servants of the Brethren's Church at Bethlehem. A few hours later—about 8 o'clock—he sat reading in his own home. Feeling sleepy, he closed his book and laid it down ; then leaned his head upon his hand and went to sleep. In this restful position he was found half an hour later, his face wearing an expression that betokened peaceful slumber, but the waking had already taken place. His “crown of life” was won.

This memorial notice would be incomplete without a brief reference to his gifts as a pulpit orator and to his literary labors. Besides his connection with *The Moravian*, his numerous contributions to encyclopedias, his monographs on "Systematic Beneficence," on "The Moravian Episcopate" and on "The Financial History of the Sustentation Fund," and his articles in the Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society, he compiled two editions of "The Moravian Manual." His most prominent literary works, however, were "The Life and Times of David Zeisberger" and the first volume of "The History of the Unitas Fratrum." For some time he had been collecting material for the second and concluding volume of the History, and his last literary work was the compilation of the Historical Sketch of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, which was read at the Society's Centennial Anniversary on November 1. In the year 1871 the degree of

S.T.D. was conferred upon him by Columbia College, New York, in appreciation of his literary and scholastic labors. In 1874 he was one of the Vice-Presidents of the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at New York. For many years he was Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of St. Luke's Hospital, at South Bethlehem, Pa.

His first wife having departed this life on September 12, 1866, leaving two sons and two daughters, he was married on October 1, 1868, to Isabel Allison Boggs, who, with one daughter and the children of the first marriage, mourn their personal loss.

The loss sustained by the Church of which he was a member, is well expressed by the official minute published by his surviving colleagues in the Provincial Board, part of which is as follows :

“ We know that we voice the sentiment of the entire American Province of the Brethren's Church, in quoting, with reference to his depar-

ture, the words of David : ' Know ye not that there is a prince fallen this day in Israel ? '

" His eminent gifts as a preacher and pastor, as a lecturer and writer, as a presiding officer and a counselor, made him the man to whom we all looked up with the highest esteem and respect, while his tender sympathy and uniform kindness, his indefatigable zeal and energy in the cause of the Lord, his loyalty to the Church of his fathers, made him an example worthy of admiration and imitation."

At the funeral services, which were held on December 21, 1887, the Rev. J. Mortimer Levering spoke as follows :

" Our Church mourns, not because we take black, despairing views of death, especially such a death ; for he has only been called up higher. According to the true teaching of our Church, such a death suggests rather thanksgiving and peace ; suggests the thoughts of those lines which he loved to sing, or to hear sung, in con-

nection with such a variety of occasions and circumstances :

‘ For when these blest days are over,
To the arms of my dear Saviour,
I shall be conveyed to rest,
Amen, yea, my lot is blest.’

“ It would be utterly at variance with his teaching and example, with his heart’s thoughts and feelings in reference to departing this life, if we were to sorrow to-day with the sorrow of the world, as those who have no hope. Nay, we mourn because, for the time being, his infinite gain is our loss, a loss which we deeply feel. Cords of affectionate association, of confidence in his presence, to counsel, to direct and to encourage, of a certain kind of dependence which we naturally feel to some extent overagainst those of commanding spirit, of wisdom and experience superior to the average, of unflinching principle and undeviating integrity—these cords must needs be severed by such a departure. Under the immediate pain

which the severing of these cords produces we are distressed, and under the first shock we cry out, 'Alas, what shall we do !' But this we may well afford to leave with confidence to the Lord, our Divine Head, Who will provide, Who abides 'the same yesterday, to-day and forever,' and Who

'Never yet mistakes hath made
In His vast government.'

"We will try rather to treasure earnestly, cheerfully and hopefully the lesson of his life and work, of his constant influence and example, for these speak most eloquently to us to-day, as his tongue and lips now silent spoke so eloquently and powerfully from this pulpit in years that are past. I shall attempt nothing further in this trying hour than to remind you of the final lesson he taught us, or, rather, our Saviour through him taught us, in his most significant and beautiful end. I feel as if the story of his end were told in the words which record the departure of another from the

Church Below to the Church on High, though under very different circumstances: 'And when he had said this he fell asleep.'

"No comparison can of course be made with the death of Stephen, but the words tell the story of that which has brought us together to-day, nevertheless. In the stillness of Sunday evening, in the quiet retirement of home, he did most literally fall asleep—no languishing, no suffering, no struggle. He had said something before he fell asleep, and can we especially, who heard the words, ever forget them? Less than six hours before his departure he sat behind this table. It was covered with a white cloth and love-feast was being held by more than two hundred persons gathered here to break bread together in the nearer fellowship of service. All the servants of the Church in Bethlehem were gathered here in this fellowship. Presiding over this gathering, he addressed to us a few words of earnest, affectionate admonition. His last admonition, his last pub-

lic address, his last exhortation to his brethren in holy service was to 'be faithful unto death.' We all remember the words, and when he had said this to us he fell asleep, himself 'faithful unto death,' faithful to the Church, faithful to his brethren and his sons and daughters in Christ, faithful to his high calling as an overseer of the flock, faithful above all things to Jesus Christ, his Master and his Saviour. These words which he spoke before he fell asleep will remain indelibly impressed upon our memory. They go out to the whole Church as his last message. Pastors of many congregations here present will carry them home to their people and they will be told to others who are not here. His life and work add force to this his dying message, and the Church which he so long, so ably, so faithfully served will best honor his memory by honoring Christ as he honored Him, and being faithful in His service unto death.

“ Especially to us, my dear brethren in the

ministry, this which he spoke before he fell asleep should come with power. Many of us were ordained to the holy ministry by the laying on of his hands. Let us treasure this, his parting admonition ; for, beloved brethren, our Church and the work entrusted to it in these times need above all things faithful men. If it pass through tribulation or suffer loss, it will be from nothing so much as from the words and deeds of ordained men who are not faithful.

“The students of our Theological Seminary are here. To them his parting message is also addressed. Some of us know, for we heard it from his own lips, that, in his last days here below, nothing lay nearer his heart among all the interests of the Church than the institution in which its future ministry is trained, and nothing caused him more deep solicitude than the question, What kind of men will these students be? Know then, my dear brethren, that the lesson of his end is, for your beginning, the lesson of faith-

fulness. In you many a prayer of his last days will be fulfilled if you look forward to your ministry, resolved by grace to be faithful, faithful to Christ, faithful to the Church, humbly, unselfishly, obediently faithful, faithful in all things, faithful unto death.

“ Most of those who, in this place, heard what he said before he fell asleep are engaged in the special service of this congregation. To us who are serving the Lord here, and to this whole congregation, the words came not only from one who presided over the affairs of our whole Church in this Province, but from a revered and beloved former pastor. Brethren, in this strange dispensation the Lord our Head and Saviour admonishes us through his lips to be faithful. Let us ponder this admonition and ask what does it mean for our congregation? Let each one ask, What does it mean for me?

“ The representatives of two schools with which he had stood in official relations are here to-day.

The teachers of these schools were present on last Sunday afternoon. The admonition is addressed to them too, in their particular calling. To the young persons under their charge the Holy Spirit speaks to-day, telling them of Christ their Saviour, Whom to know is life eternal, Whom to follow and to serve faithfully even unto death is the highest and holiest employment of life.

“Remembering then these words which he spoke before he fell asleep in their wide application, assuredly the dear ones of his home and family circle, though they feel this loss as none of us can feel it, may yet be comforted by the thought that his significant and beautiful end may be used by our Lord and Saviour for so much and so great good. We all desire, as far as we are able, to help them bear their great sorrow, and so too we call upon them to join us in learning the lesson of his end and profiting by it to the glory of his Saviour, theirs and ours. What more shall I attempt to say? What more need be said? We

will let the Lord speak Who admonishes us all to-day.

“As we reverently and affectionately lay to rest all that is mortal of this beloved brother and revered father in Jesus Christ, we will thank the divine Head of the Church for all that He has done through him; we will rejoice, while we sorrow, that he rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. We will feel that in his departure the bond is strengthened which ‘keeps us in everlasting fellowship with the Church triumphant.’ AMEN.”

